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ABSTRACT

The goal of this report is to identify factors that led to success for L2 (second language learning or acquisition) students at Bunker Hill Community College (BHCC) (Massachusetts). The author intends to use the results of the study to write proposals to secure funding for the success of more L2 students. He originally intended to read a total of 227 transcripts from the three different curricula delivered by the English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) department since 1983. However, because of the high attrition rate, the author read 512 transcripts in order to demonstrate the accuracy of the attrition rate. Highlights of the study include: (1) the author read 157 transcripts of ESL students enrolled in 1985 when the ESL department delivered a traditional grammar-based ESL curriculum with no tutors. Thirty-two percent never took the course and 54% never passed a college-level content course. The author notes that he read the transcripts by course section, and in one section 19 out of 28 moved on to college-level content courses, while in another section 15 out of 26 did not move beyond ESL courses; and (2) the author read 138 transcripts of students enrolled in 1991, when the ESL department delivered a more challenging grammar-based curriculum. Twenty-four percent did not move on to the next course level, and 45% never attempted or passed college content courses. This was an improvement form the 1985 cohort. (Contains research forms, tables, and 13 references, including conferences and workshops.) (NB)

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BUNKER HILL COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Learning for the Real World

Spring 2000 Sabbatical Report

AUGUST 23, 2000

"An Assessment of the Academic ESL Department's Curriculums and ESL Student Performance, 1983 – 2000: A Qualitative Quantitative Report"

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ABSTRACT

This sabbatical report has assessed 512 ESL student transcripts from 1983 – 2000 to identify factors that lead to success for ESL students in the context of the four pillars for institutions of higher education.

- Students
- Curriculum
- Faculty Members (The Faculty Factor)
- Institutional Resources

In addition, the statistics generated from this report have been compared to national and local attrition/completion rates for not only ESL students in community colleges but also for the general population of four-year institution and community college students.

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

1. The most effective BHCC ESL Department curricula have been those that integrate ESL Department curriculum with other academic departments' curricula (The "Integrated" Model, 1989 – 1993 and 1998 – Present). The statistics generated from these courses are far superior to the national and local data and the data collected from other BHCC ESL Department curricula.

2. Due to the variables, this report presents no conclusive data to suggest that of the three "traditional" ESL Department's curricula assessed, one has been the most effective. However, the 1998 curriculum, which delivers reading, writing, and grammar across the curriculum, has had the most noteworthy results with ESL student success in writing courses in and out of the ESL Department. The student transcripts from 1998 will be assessed again in 2003 to see if the success rate in all college content courses is also noteworthy.

3. More statistics have to be collected for these variables: student preparedness, motivation, and purpose for attending BHCC; institutional resources; and the faculty factor.

4. Variations in student performance and success rates have existed and continue to exist in various sections of the same ESL course taught by different faculty members.

5. To reduce attrition rates, especially in ESL Levels I and II, and increase ESL student success rates in all sections of the same ESL course, the author suggests that the ESL Department and the institution seek funding to reimburse ESL Department faculty members to meet with faculty members from all academic departments and especially the English Department in order to align curricula, develop more "integrated courses" and ESL Certificate Programs, and discuss how one ESL course connects to all other ESL courses and how ESL courses connect to college content courses.

This report contains many details and statistics that may not interest all readers. Please refer to the table of contents.

Spring 2000 Sabbatical Report

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Definition of Common ESL Terms

ESL, English as a Second Language:

- ESL is taught in countries whose national language is English. The approaches, methods and techniques differ from the approaches, methods and techniques used to teach foreign languages simply because students are exposed to the target language (English) outside of the classroom.

EFL, English as A Foreign Language:

- EFL is taught in countries whose national language is not English. The approaches, methods, and techniques tend to focus on the language skills of reading and writing. Grammar plays a significant role in curriculum development, much as it does in foreign language instruction.

ESP, English for Special Purposes

- The curriculum for this type of instruction focuses on English within a context, such as English for Business, Electronics, Criminal Justice, etc..

VESL, Vocational English as a Second Language

- Different from ESL and ESP in that the curriculum focuses on vocational training, such as carpentry, electrician, etc. and finding and keeping a job.

L1, Native Language or First Language

- L1 refers to the first language learned by a student. Therefore, it is possible for a person to have been born in the USA, but L1 may not be English. This person may have been exposed to a language other than English at home and even learned reading and writing first in that foreign language.

L2, Second Language or Third, Fourth, Fifth

- L2 refers to a second language that someone is learning. However, that person may in fact be learning a third, fourth, or fifth language. L2 is also used to refer to second language acquisition, which differs from first language acquisition. An L2 student is not always an ESL student.

L1 L2 Acquisition

- The sequence of learning language skills varies with individuals. With L1 acquisition, the language skills of listening and speaking usually occur first followed by reading and writing; grammar rules are usually internalized and some people cannot explain the grammatical rules of their L1. With L2 acquisition, the language skills of reading

and writing usually occur first followed by listening and speaking. However, there is more variation with L2 acquisition than with L1 acquisition, especially with younger learners who may learn listening and speaking first and then reading and writing. Formal and informal instruction play a vital role in L2 acquisition. With formal instruction, the learner is usually introduced to grammatical structures. Learning L2 in an informal environment is closer to the learning process for L1.

Developmental

- ESL is not developmental. Developmental implies that a student is learning subject matter that should have been learned before entering college level courses. Refugees and immigrants must not be held to this definition. ESL course credits are not applied toward graduation at all colleges and universities throughout the USA. However, at some institutions they may be applied toward graduation as humanities or foreign language courses. If ESL course curricula are compared with the curricula for foreign languages, they will be equal if not more demanding.

LEP, Limited English Proficient

- An L2 student who is not totally proficient in English.

Non-Native Speaker

- Anyone for whom English is a second, third or more language

Integrated, Paired, Clustered Courses

- In this concept, one or more ESL courses are paired, integrated, clustered with one or more college level content courses. The word **"integrated"** implies that the faculty members who teach these courses meet to integrate the curriculum of their respective courses.

Grammar

- The teaching of grammar and where it belongs in an academic ESL curriculum is a controversial topic for many ESL professionals. Some believe in teaching it overtly with a structured and chronological order. Others believe in teaching grammar within the context of reading assignments and depending on what students need based on their writing abilities. Still others believe in combining these two approaches. Where does the learner fit into these three approaches? Do all students benefit form overt teaching of grammar? How will teachers know what structures to teach if students never use those structures and therefore how can teachers know what their weaknesses are?

TESOL and TOEFL

- Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages and Test of English as a Foreign Language.

Author Background and Bias

BACKGROUND

Immigrated from Italy at age 4 with parents

B.A. in Italian with Bilingual Education/ESL concentration, UMASS, Amherst, 1979

Ed. M. in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL), Boston University, 1982

ESL Coordinator, Chinese American Civic Association, Boston, MA, 1979 – 1984

- Developed and delivered first curriculum for ESL/Office Skills with Honeywell, 1981
- Developed curriculum for ESL/Printing Machines, 1981

Adjunct ESL Instructor, Bunker Hill Community College (BHCC), Boston, MA, 1981 - 1984

Director of ESL/Electronic, BHCC, 1984 – 1985

Admissions Counselor, BHCC, 1985 – 1986

ESL Professor, BHCC, 1986 – Present

- ESL Evening Coordinator, 1986 – 1992
- ESL Department Chair, 1996 – 1999

BIAS

Served as ESL Department Chair when new curriculum in 1998 was developed. Prior to changing curriculum, involved full-time and adjunct faculty members in consensus building, but the final decisions were mine. Of course, I would like to see the new curriculum outperform the old ones. However, the ESL Department is delivering this new curriculum with tutors and ESL software and computer stations that did not accompany the previous curricula.

BELIEFS and OPINIONS

ESL is not developmental; there are ESL students enrolled in academic ESL courses that have developmental needs but the discipline of ESL is not developmental.

The instruction of ESL, at least the advanced level, which prepares ESL students for college content courses, should be standardized nationally.

ESL courses at institutions of higher education should carry credit toward graduation as either a foreign language or humanities course. However, first there has to be national standardization to the ESL curriculum.

ESL faculty members at institutions of higher education across the country have been more concerned with meeting the needs of their local students, but we should be able to do both:

- Meet the needs of ESL students at the local level, and
- Standardize a national ESL curriculum for institutions of higher education.

ESL faculty members in community colleges should have an Ed. M. in TESOL.

Faculty members in community colleges should make a difference, which should be able to be measured.

Qualitative and formative assessment, which is usually more work for faculty members

Teaching ESL in context, whenever possible

Delivering an academic ESL curriculum by combining reading and writing and teaching grammar in the context of the readings and student generated writing along with students learning grammar sequentially with grammar software

An academic ESL curriculum should be delivered to ESL students who are literate in native language. If ESL students are not literate in native language, instruction has to be individualized and student will have to spend much more time on task.

An academic ESL course needs more time than the allocated 45 contact hours for 3 credits as prescribed by most institutions of higher education. Therefore, institutions of higher education must have appropriate and adequate resources for L2 students, such as tutors and computer stations.

Institutions of higher education are **"soft"** primarily because they are more interested in enrollment figures at the beginning of a semester and not at the end of a semester. Full-time enrolment (FTE) at the beginning of a semester determines budget for state institutions in Massachusetts but it should be at the end of the semester. Outcome assessment should determine funding.

There should be national standards for community colleges concerning success and failure rates, especially for ESL courses and developmental/remedial education.

ESL Department Curricula at BHCC, 1974 - 2000

BHCC opened it doors to students in 1973.

ESL was first offered in the Center for Self-Directed Learning in 1974.

- 10103 English as a Second Language: An emphasis on the skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing needed for work at the community college level and for occupations students will enter. Varied Credits.

The ESL Department was formed in 1980 and offered the following courses:

- 10005 Intermediate ESL I: This course is designed for low intermediate level students who have a basic understanding of the spoken and written language. The focus is on auditory discrimination, pronunciation practice, conversation, grammar, vocabulary development, and sentence construction. (12 credits)

- 10006 Intermediate ESL II: This course is designed for high intermediate students. The focus is on listening comprehension, conversation, reading skill development, grammar and paragraph development. (12 credits)

- 10015 Advanced ESL: Aural/Oral Skills: This course develops critical listening skills while addressing problems of grammar and usage. Supplementary instruction is provided through the Learning Center (now called the Center for Self-Directed Learning). (4 credits)

- 10016 Advanced ESL Reading Comprehension: To develop the proficiencies needed for academic reading, course work focuses on comprehension improvement, vocabulary development and study skills. Supplementary instruction is provided in the Learning Center. (4 Credits)

- 10017 Advanced ESL Composition: In preparation for Freshman composition courses, course work focuses on advanced grammar, paragraph development, and short compositions. (4 Credits)

The ESL Department conducted its first self-study for two reasons during the 1988 – 1989 academic year. First, the state office of higher education mandated a five-year cycle of reviews for all programs and departments. Second, there was a growing concern of some college course faculty members about the English language preparation of ESL students at BHCC.

In 1989 - 1990, in order to better prepare ESL students for academic content courses, the ESL Department changed ESL Level II to Level I, Level III to Level II, and introduced new Level III advanced courses. However, the new curriculum was developed bottom - up from Level I to Level III instead of top - down by first

establishing expected exit outcomes from Level III and then working down to Level I. As this new curriculum was developed there was no interaction and therefore no attempt to align ESL curriculum with English Department or other academic department curricula.

- ESL 071 Intermediate ESL I Grammar/Composition: For lower-intermediate ESL students, this course reviews the fundamentals of grammar and sentence structure. (6 Credits)

- ESL 072 Intermediate ESL I Reading/Speaking/Listening: For lower-intermediate ESL students, this course focuses on reading skills development, vocabulary, listening comprehension and speaking skills. (6 Credits)

- ESL 081 Intermediate ESL II Grammar/Composition: A course for higher-intermediate students focusing on more complex grammar/sentence structure. Paragraph development is emphasized. (6 Credits)

- ESL 082 Intermediate ESL II Reading/Speaking/Listening: A course for higher-intermediate students focusing on more advanced reading texts and listening comprehension tasks. Continued practice in speaking, including pronunciation, will be included. (6 Credits)

- ESL 091 Advanced ESL Listening: In this course advanced ESL students will develop critical listening and note-taking skills in preparation for college-level study. (3 Credits)

- ESL 092 Advanced ESL Speaking: This course provides advanced level ESL students with the discussion skills and pronunciation practice necessary for the college classroom. (3 Credits)

- ESL 093 Advanced ESL Reading: Advanced ESL students will improve their academic reading skills in this course. Reading comprehension, vocabulary development, and study skills will be emphasized. (3 Credits)

- ESL 094 Advanced ESL Writing: This course prepares the advanced ESL student for college-level writing by focusing on advanced grammar, sentence structure, and paragraph development. (3 Credits)

ESL transition courses were offered upon completion of advanced level ESL courses: These courses were designed to provide language support as ESL students began to take college content courses.

- ESL 111 English for Electronics
- ESL 112 English for Basic Sciences
- ESL 113 English for Business and Computer Science

These courses were not embraced by the full-time members of the ESL Department; only two full-time faculty members taught them.

These courses were replaced in 1993 by

- ESL 509 ESL Transition.

The first ESL Department Self-Study was conducted in 1989 because of the state mandated five-year department/program review process. However, the second self-study was not conducted five years later because there was an impasse on the union contract, so much for the state mandate. The next self-study took place in 1997, when the ESL Department curriculum was changed to the following courses:

- ESL 076 Note-Taking with Reading and Writing I: This low intermediate course focuses on listening and note-taking skills. Students will begin to develop a system for note taking and learn how to use their notes to answer comprehension questions. All listening and note taking activities will include reading and writing exercises. (3 Credits)

- ESL 077 Speaking with Reading and Writing I: This low intermediate course focuses on the speaking skills that are necessary in an academic setting. All speaking activities will be organized around reading and writing exercises. (3 Credits)

- ESL 078 Reading with Writing I: This low intermediate course focuses on reading skills and vocabulary development. Students will be asked to demonstrate an understanding of reading materials with comprehension questions and writing assignments. (3 Credits)

- ESL 079 Writing with Reading I: This low intermediate course focuses on the fundamentals of sentence structure. Students will be asked to write paragraphs from personal experience and from readings. (3 Credits)

- ESL 086 Note-Taking with Reading and Writing II: This high intermediate course focuses on listening and note-taking skills. Students will continue to develop a system for note taking and use their notes to answer comprehension questions. All listening and note-taking activities will include reading and writing exercises. (3 Credits)

- ESL 087 Speaking with Reading and Writing II: This high intermediate course focuses on the speaking skills that are necessary in an academic setting. Students will discuss academic reading materials in small groups and begin to develop a method for delivering an oral presentation to a large group. All speaking activities will be organized around reading and writing exercises. (3 Credits)

- ESL 088 Reading with Writing II. This high intermediate course focuses on reading skills and vocabulary development. Students will be asked to demonstrate an

understanding of the reading materials with comprehension questions and writing assignments. (3 Credits)

- ESL 089 Writing with Reading II: This high intermediate course focuses on the fundamentals of sentence structure. Students will be asked to write paragraphs and essays from personal experience and from readings. (3 Credits)

- ESL 096 Note-Taking with Reading and Writing III: This advanced course focuses on note-taking skills. Students will continue to develop an academic note-taking system and learn how to use their notes to answer comprehension questions. Students will listen to academic lectures, take notes, and learn how to answer essay type questions and write essays based on the lectures. All note-taking activities will include reading and writing exercises. (3 Credits)

- ESL 097 Speaking with Reading and Writing III: This advanced course focuses on speaking skills that are necessary in an academic setting. Students will discuss academic reading materials in small groups. Students will develop a method for delivering oral presentations to a large group and increase self-confidence. All speaking activities will be organized around reading and writing exercises. (3 Credits)

- ESL 098 Reading with Writing III: This advanced course focuses on critical and analytical reading skills that are necessary in content courses. Students will learn to cite sources and answer essay type questions based on readings. Students will be asked to demonstrate comprehension of reading materials with writing assignments. (3 Credits)

- ESL 099 Writing with Reading III: This advanced course focuses on academic writing skills that are necessary for content courses. Students will continue to develop their abilities with sentence structure, paragraph writing, and essay writing. Students will be asked to write paragraphs and essays from personal experience and from readings. Students will learn to cite sources and answer essay questions from readings. (3 Credits)

Each course has the following written in the course description:

- Grammar is taught in the context of the reading materials and student generated writing. This course must be completed with a grade of C or better in order to take other ESL courses.

The clustered/integrated concept began in 1998. The ESL Department clusters one or more advanced level ESL courses with a college content course. The ESL Department also pairs two ESL courses at the same level, which are taught by the same instructor and must be taken by the same group of students.

This new curriculum is being delivered with more tutors than ever before and 25 networked computer stations with sufficient ESL software.

Goals and Objectives of Sabbatical Report

The general goal of this report and collection of data is to identify factors that lead to success for L2 students at BHCC, and then write proposals to secure funding so that more L2 students can succeed. Since I do not have a background in collection and analysis of data, the statistics collected in this report will be given to the Director of Institutional Research and Assessment who reports to the Dean of Institutional Effectiveness at BHCC. They will be asked to create charts with percentages and evaluate for

- Sample Size
- Peer Review
- Normal Distribution
- Regression
- Correlation
- Margin of Error/Sigma Test, Test of Statistical Significance
- Standard Deviation

The four original goals were:

1. **Establish success, failure, and retention rates for ESL students at BHCC. The activities to realize this goal were to read 90 transcripts (30 for each level) for the three different curricula delivered by the ESL Department since 1983 for a total of 227 transcripts.**

- When I first started reading transcripts, I was impressed by the significant attrition rate and needed to demonstrate if this rate was accurate. Therefore, instead of reading a total of 227 transcripts, 512 were read. This part of the sabbatical report is more substantial than initially planned.
- The goal has always been to use this sabbatical report to write proposals to secure funding for ESL students. Given the analysis of the student transcripts, proposals will be written to hire a full-time second language assessment specialist who could possibly coordinate all assessment at BHCC. Other proposals will be written to secure funding that will be used for professional development in the following areas:

    - To compare ESL Department curricula with specifically English Department curricula and other academic department curricula in order to align them
    - To reimburse adjunct and full-time ESL faculty members as they are trained to use the institutional resources: The attrition rate for Level I and Level II ESL students must be lowered. My experience tells me that not enough ESL faculty members connect ESL courses to one another and to college content courses. The result is that ESL students see the road to college content courses as long and difficult. If all ESL faculty members can explain how these courses are connected within the context of the college catalog and refer students quickly to institutional resources, ESL students will be motivated and focused to stay in the lower level courses.

2. **Compare how L2 students perform in ESL courses compared to how L2 students performed in RDG 090 and ENG 090 (first semester developmental reading and writing courses offered by the English Department) in Professor David Massey's 1998 sabbatical report. The failure rate in Professor Massey's report for L2 students enrolled in RDG 090, ENG 090, and MAT 090 is alarming. In terms of curricula, ESL Level II reading and writing courses compare to RDG 090 and ENG 090. Therefore, to compare the performance of L2 students in these four courses, the activities proposed were to read 25 transcripts from 1995 in ESL 081 and 25 from 1996 in ESL 082. The students selected must also be enrolled in MAT 090. One potential problem is that the ESL Department does not allow ESL students to enroll in math courses while they are in ESL Level II.**

- This goal has not been completed. BHCC has just converted its computer systems, from DATATEL to BISSI, and until recently queries could not be run on the new system. Now that a query can be run, this goal will be completed by December 2000. However, the transcripts read for GOAL # 1 suggest that the failure/attrition rate for L2 students enrolled in ESL courses is lower than the failure/attrition rate of L2 students enrolled in developmental courses as presented in Professor Massey's report.

3. **Compare ESL students who move from advanced ESL to ENG 095 to ENG 111 to ENG 112 with ESL students who move from advanced ESL to ENG 111 to ENG 112.**

- This will be addressed by December 2000 with another query.

4. **Conduct a mail survey to determine where ESL students go upon completion of ESL courses at BHCC.**

- The initial activity to realize this goal was to send a survey to 500 students. Surveys in the past have not had a high return, and upon completion of GOAL # 1, I have changed plans. I would like to send surveys to only the students who studied with the new curriculum in 1998 and who are no longer enrolled at the college with particular attention to those students who have earned between 3 – 9 college credits and who are no longer enrolled.

    - After the second week in September 2000, I will know who these students are and surveys will be mailed to them.

Variables

Analyzing statistics in aggregate form can be misleading, especially if variables are not listed and explained. Community college students are diverse. They attend for many reasons and with various levels of preparedness. Here is a list of variables that must be considered when reading the presentation and analysis of data in this report.

Unfortunately, transcripts do not provide any information concerning these variables, but transcripts should state some of them.

- Reason for attending BHCC. The attrition rate is high, but the transcript does not list the reason for attending BHCC. Perhaps the student came for just one course.
- Student proficiency in L1, especially academic language skills. This is a crucial factor in L2 acquisition when an academic ESL curriculum is delivered. Is the student literate in L1? All L2 students accepted to BHCC must provide the Office of Admissions with a high school diploma. However, a high school diploma does not guarantee literacy in L1. Generally speaking, the more proficient a student is in L1, the more quickly that student will acquire L2.
- First Generation College Student
- Experience with academic studies in native country. If a student has attended and experienced success in a university in native country, the chances for success in an institution of higher education in the USA increase.
- Responsibilities and distractions out of the classroom including lack of a support network
- Learning Disability

- Student motivation, focus, and determination: In my opinion, this is the most important ingredient that contributes to student success, even when a student is not completely academically prepared. Good faculty members know how to tap into this variable and bring out the best in ESL students. Unfortunately, this faculty factor has never been measured. However, the presentation and analysis of data attempts to consider the faculty factor.

- Number of Students per section
- The Faculty Factor: Reading transcripts in aggregate form precludes that all faculty members are equal, that we are all "TBA". However, some faculty members make more of a difference that others. In my many years as coordinator and department chair, I know that some faculty members are more effective teachers, but how can this be proved?

When I first started to read transcripts, I decided to read them by course section. My reasoning was that of all the variables, at least I would have some control over the faculty factor and the number of students per section.

ASSESSMENT IN CONTEXT

Introduction to BHCC and ESL

Bunker Hill Community College, located in the Charlestown area of Boston, is one of 15 community colleges in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and began to offer English as a Second Language (ESL) courses in 1974. The ESL Department is in the Liberal Arts Division and the ESL Department Chair, who reports to the Dean of the Liberal Arts Division, coordinates all ESL courses. The ESL Department offers academic ESL courses in the ESL/English for Academic Purposes Department (ESL/EAP). These courses carry institutional credit, which can not be applied toward certificate or associate degree programs. The ESL Department also offers non-credit courses in the Basic English as a Second Language Department (BESL) through the Office of Community Education.

The ESL/EAP Department has ten full-time and between 35 - 40 adjunct faculty members; the BESL Department employs from 12 - 18 adjunct faculty members. Every semester BHCC enrolls from 700 - 800 ESL students. Both Departments offer three levels of instruction: the BESL Department offers two courses at each level; Listening/Speaking and Reading/Writing: the ESL/EAP Department offers four courses at each level; Note-Taking, Speaking, Reading, Writing. All of these courses teach reading, writing, and grammar across the curriculum. The Department's philosophy is "college content courses as soon as possible with language support as long as necessary".

To support this philosophy in 1989 the ESL Department offered transitional courses to bridge ESL instruction with college content course instruction. These courses were "English for Business and Computer Science"; "English for Basic Sciences"; and "English for Electronics". In 1992, these courses were no longer offered and the Department designed a course on American Culture. This course is now offered in the Humanities Department and carries credit toward graduation. The Department began to offer the "integrated" course concept, which combines one or more advanced level ESL courses with a college level content course, in 1998.

BHCC and the ESL Department have been recognized locally and nationally for delivering innovative ESL curricula. The ESL Department received the 2000 International/Intercultural Award from the American Council on International Intercultural Education under the category English Program for International Students. The ESL/Electronics Certificate Program, begun in 1984, was cited as "The Outstanding Vocational Program in the Region" by the U.S. Secretary of Education in 1988 and was recognized as the most outstanding occupational training program in the state in 1992. The ESL/Allied Health Certificate Program was also recognized as the most outstanding occupational training program in the state in 1990.

"Where Are the Statistics?"

Assessment at all levels (lesson, course, department, and institution) took on a more significant role for me while serving as ESL Department chair at BHCC from 1996 to 1999. During this time the importance of documenting success and attrition rates of students enrolled in ESL courses became apparent, especially when seeking funding from the private sector and when identifying strengths and weaknesses within the Department. The private sector usually has to track and prove everything with performance based indicators; they expect us to do the same before considering us for funding. They want to specifically know how their money will improve student success. BHCC and the ESL Department have few statistics concerning ESL student persistence, course completion, graduation, and attrition rates. (1) In addition, these statistics play a vital role when a department conducts a self-study.

The ESL Department was fortunate to receive a grant from The Polaroid Corporation in 1998 to hire ESL tutors. (2) However, before we continued writing grants for more funding, documenting ESL student success and attrition rates would be needed.

A Culture of Assessment

BHCC introduced the culture of assessment in 1997 by making Classroom Assessment Techniques (CAT) and Classroom Assessment Research (CAR) training available to faculty members, and two members of the ESL Department have been participating. When the first opportunity, also in 1997, presented itself to work on course outcome assessment with the Carl Perkins Education Act Grant that BHCC had received through the Office of Grants and Contracts, seven of the then eight full-time members of the ESL Department worked together to develop course outcome assessment tools. (3)

During the summer of 1997, ESL Department faculty members surveyed the 14 community colleges and the five four-year institutions with large ESL enrollments in Massachusetts to identify what they used for assessment and how their curriculums were organized. At this time, the ESL Department was also conducting its Self-Study (4). The assessment survey plus the Self-Study resulted in a new Academic ESL curriculum that features reading and writing across the curriculum with specific grammatical structures taught in each course as well as grammar taught in the context of student writing and the reading materials used for a particular course. Department members prepared more than 20 assessment tools that can be used at the beginning, middle or end of a semester.

Most of these assessment tools ask students to first read several paragraphs or more and respond to the reading selection with either a writing prompt, open ended or short answer questions. Faculty members moved in this direction because as part of our self study, we had conducted a literature survey of the most recent trends in second language acquisition, which led us to believe that academic ESL is learned more quickly and effectively when students are engaged in academic discourse; that is learning how to connect two or more academic readings, cite sources, etc. This finding was supported by the Self-Study outside evaluator. A few tools were developed with simple writing prompts with no reading assignment, which had been the trend in the ESL Department.

I attended several conferences from 1996 to 1997 and what I learned confirmed what I had been taught as a graduate student in Boston University's Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages Program (TESOL); ESL students benefit most from teaching ESL in context with formative and qualitative assessment. Formative assessment because this occurs throughout the entire semester with quick feedback and much teacher/student interaction. Qualitative because faculty members ask open ended, multiple choice, or essay type questions, identify their students' strengths and weaknesses, and provide quality feedback as quickly as possible. However, these forms of assessment may work for some faculty members and students, but they may not work for everyone nor should they.

Summative assessment occurs at the end of a chapter, midterm or semester, which may not give students time to take steps to improve, especially if faculty members continue introducing new information without students having learned the prior information needed to learn the new. Quantitative assessment relies on multiple choice types of questions, on which students do little or no writing. This may not be the most helpful form of assessment for ESL students who need as much "real output" in the form of speaking and writing and "real input" in the form of reading and listening as possible.

The full-time members of the ESL Department continued to work on the concept of formative and qualitative assessment; during the summer of 1998, we developed more than twenty additional tools on a completely volunteer basis. These tools are designed to be used only at the beginning of a semester to not only identify students' strengths and weaknesses with language skills but also to provide them with an orientation to higher education. Therefore, several of these tools ask them to integrate an academic reading about higher education from a newspaper or magazine with the BHCC catalog.

Assessment did not end at this point. The Office of Grants and Contracts with the Carl Perkins Grant served as the catalyst for the following meetings. First, twenty two members of the ESL and English Departments met several times during the Spring 1998 Semester and assessed ESL student writings to discuss what kind of writing qualified for advanced level ESL, developmental, and college level writing. Second, during the Spring 1999 Semester twenty members of the ESL/EAP and BESL Departments met. Participants evaluated ESL student writing to discuss what kind of writing qualified for college and developmental level writing all the way down to the most basic level in the BESL Department.

As ESL Department Chair, I felt that I had the responsibility to do something concrete due to all this assessment activity. I compiled handbooks for ESL faculty members, students, and tutors. These handbooks include the following:

- ESL Department Philosophy;
- Curriculum for each ESL Course;
- Assessment Statement;
- Placement Test Writing Samples – These writing samples give faculty members an idea of how students should be writing at the beginning of a semester;

- End of Semester Writing Samples – These give examples of "Fail", "Borderline", and "Pass" for each level of ESL;
- A Rubric to Assess ESL Student Writing; and
- Institutional and ESL Department Statement of Effectiveness.

In addition, I applied for and received a sabbatical for the spring 2000 Semester. The title of my sabbatical report is "An Assessment of the Academic ESL Department's Curriculums and ESL Student Performance, 1983-2000: A Qualitative Quantitative Report". This report uses five hundred student transcripts as its central focus to analyze the relationship between the four pillars of higher education: students, faculty members, curriculum, and institutional resources. The Web Site for this sabbatical report is http://www.homestead.com/academicesl/.

A brief literature search for data and statistics concerning ESL student course completion, graduation, and attrition rates in community colleges in the United States has revealed no specific results. There may be reasons for this lack of hard data. One is that ESL is considered remedial/developmental at some community colleges and at others it carries college credit toward graduation. Unfortunately, there are neither accurate remedial nor non-credit enrollment figures available on a national level. (5) The search for data will continue.

Therefore, writing about course outcome assessment without giving equal attention to the above mentioned information, lesson level assessment as well as department level and institutional level assessment seems to be writing in a vacuum for me.

Lesson Level Assessment

When I was a graduate student in Boston University's TESOL Program, Professor Steven Molinsky preached that we should make sure that our students learn something new at the end of each lesson. As a novice teacher, it was common for me to place a tape recorder somewhere in the classroom. I would play it at the end of the day to assess if I spoke more than my students did or if I called on males more than females or if I was confusing or enlightening them. I used to and continue to end each of my lessons with five simple questions that capture the heart of the lesson I tried to deliver that day. I begin the next lesson by handing back the answers to those questions.

Professor Tom Angelo was a classmate of mine in one of Professor Molinsky's courses at Boston University and a featured speaker at the American Council on Education/Chairing The Academic Department in Clearwater, Florida, 1997. In addition to his presentation, I attended an informal breakfast session he led. I felt that he was basically challenging us to prove that students were learning because of our lessons and not due to some other form of instruction delivered through another medium. He asked us to not only measure our students' strengths and weaknesses as soon as possible in the semester but also to measure their assumptions. He stated that prior knowledge is the single biggest predictor to success in college courses; unlearning is more difficult than learning.

Solid instruction starts with knowing our students' prior knowledge and moving the curriculum from the known to the unknown. This concept was repeated over and over again in my training as an ESL teacher. However, ESL faculty members tend to focus more on the teacher – student relationship, or on the teacher – textbook – student relationship than on the teacher – student – curriculum – institutional resources relationship. (6)

Course Outcome Level Assessment

From lesson level assessment, we can move to course outcome level assessment, but these forms of assessment have to be consistent. If our ESL lesson level assessment asks students to integrate reading with writing and our course outcome level assessment asks them to respond to a simple writing prompt without a reading selection, the students will be confused and may not perform to their abilities with the course outcome level assessment. Both forms of assessment have to reflect the curriculum; if assessment reflects the curriculum, then assessment will enhance teaching and learning and not take time away from them.

Assessment does much more than measure outcomes, however. These are the questions that I constantly ask myself about assessment:

- Are the students assimilating the curriculum for this course?
- How am I going to prove that?
- Am I delivering the curriculum in such a way that allows for as many of the students enrolled in this course as possible to demonstrate proficiency on whatever test/assessment tool they take?
- How do I adjust my teaching style to match up with all the different learning styles that these diverse students bring to my lessons?
- Can I demonstrate that these students are learning because of me and not in spite of me or because of some other form of learning such as the Internet or self study?
- Do they have concrete examples of what is expected of them in this course?
- Can I take credit for student learning if I cannot prove that I have something to do with it?

I administer a minimum of three assessment tools during the course of a semester, and they do not take time away from teaching/learning. They enhance it because they are curriculum centered and driven. The first assessment tool, given during the first week of the semester, begins to identify students' strengths, weaknesses, and assumptions. I assess their work with the department rubric, which students quickly learn to use. The rubric I return includes qualitative comments. Immediately, I can refer students to the Multi-Assistance Center or Center for Self-Directed Learning to work with tutors and/or ESL software. Then we teach, learn, unlearn, and challenge assumptions (mine included) in a friendly and respectful environment and polite manner, which leads to the administration of the second assessment tool during the sixth week of the semester.

By the sixth week, the students know how to use the rubric. When they hand in this second assessment tool, they also pass in the rubric and they are the first to assess their own work. I assess the tools with the rubric, give qualitative feedback, return them and we compare how we assessed the tool according to the rubric. When we disagree on a point of the rubric, we discuss it until one of us is convinced, and if we cannot reach a mutual decision, we ask for a third or fourth reader. All of the discussion generated from the assessment of the tool is curriculum based. We can point to the ESL Student Handbook and the "Fail", "Borderline", and "Pass" examples and the curriculum.

On the seventh week, the students assess me with the G.I.F.T., Group Informal Feedback on Teaching. This is one of the many techniques in the Cross/Angelo Assessment Handbook. This form simply asks students to tell me two things that I do to help them learn; two things that do not help them learn; and two or three suggestions to improve teaching/learning in our lessons. I let students take this home; students have given me some wonderful ideas over the past several years.

If I have strayed from the curriculum, the sixth week assessment tool and the seventh week G.I.F.T. bring me back and we return to learning, teaching, and so on. The fourteenth week brings the third assessment tool, and at this point we all know where we stand. The students can basically tell me where they are in terms of assimilating the curriculum and if they are prepared for the next course, especially if that course is in the ESL Department because the ESL Student Handbook lists the curriculum for each ESL course. However, they also know if they are ready for a developmental writing course, a college writing course, a college content course that will challenge their language skills, especially reading and writing or a less challenging college content course.

Department Outcome and Institutional Level Assessment

Department outcome level assessment logically follows course outcome level assessment and has to be connected to institutional level assessment. Therefore, my sabbatical report looks at how success or failure in one ESL course leads to success or failure in not only other ESL courses but also college content courses. The literature search for hard data and statistics concerning ESL student graduation/attrition rates in community colleges in the USA, as mentioned previously, has revealed little. Professor Patricia Cross may have been correct when she wrote that critics have said that educational institutions are **"soft"** and **"overweight"** in her Monograph.

However, how do institutions of higher education assess department and institutional outcomes? The United States is divided into six accrediting regions: Northwest, Western Association, North Central, New England, Middle States, and Southern Association. From the conferences and presentations attended and presentations delivered, I inferred that each region uses its own standards to accredit institutions. Are some regions more demanding of institutions than others are in terms of assessment and documentation? (7)

I am not convinced that an accredited institution in one region would automatically be accredited in another region. Some institutions do much more than others in terms of

documenting student success and attrition rates and organizing an institutional assessment plan.

These regions and all community colleges need to identify standards of success. Students enter and exit community colleges for many reasons. Completion of one or several courses and graduation or attrition rates cannot be the only measures of success and failure.

My sabbatical report considers the four pillars for institutions of higher education: faculty members, students, curriculum, and institutional resources. Is it possible to assess one of these pillars without considering the other three?

I read 157 transcripts of ESL students enrolled in **1985** as the ESL Department delivered a traditional grammar based ESL curriculum with no tutors or computer stations with ESL software.

- 32% never took the next course.
- 54% never passed a college level content course.

However, since I read transcripts by course sections, the following observation stands out. Is it possible that all the "good" students were in the same section?

In one section,

- 19 out of 28 moved on to college content courses.

Whereas, in another section,

- 15 out of 26 did not move beyond ESL courses.

Combining these transcripts in one report without noting these differences distorts the data.

I read 138 transcripts of ESL students enrolled in **1991** when the ESL Department delivered a more challenging grammar based curriculum. There were very few tutors and not enough computer stations and ESL software programs for the many ESL students enrolled at BHCC.

- 24% did not move on to the next course and
- 45% never attempted or passed college content courses: an improvement from the **1985** cohort.

I also read 157 transcripts of ESL students enrolled in 1998, and it is too early to apply percentages to this group because many are still enrolled, and those who have left may return. This is when the ESL Department began its new curriculum, offered the "integrated" course concept, had many tutors, as well as 25 networked computer stations with ESL software programs. With these institutional resources, student success should be greater. One statistic that stands out at the moment is the number of students who attempted to pass a writing course (advanced ESL writing, developmental writing, College Writing I, or College Writing II) two or more times.

- For the 1985 group, it was 15% and 11% made it to the College Writing II course.
- For the 1991 group, it was 28%, but 17% made it to the College Writing II course.
- For the 1998 group, it is 7% and 12 % have made it to the College Writing II course.

The numbers will change for the 1998 group, and it appears they will be the most successful group, which is what one would expect given the curriculum and institutional resources.

The Faculty Factor

However, the biggest difference is still seen with individual faculty members. How can we explain when we compare these two Level I sections from **1998**?

In one section with 20 students,
- 6 did not take the next course,
- 11 are still enrolled,
- 6 have earned between 3-9 college credits,
- 4 have earned between 12-24 college credits,
- 1 has earned more than 27 college credits.

In another section of the same course with 22 students,
- 9 did not take the next course,
- 5 are still enrolled,
- 3 have earned between 3-9 college credits.

Do faculty members make a difference and can we prove it? At the community college level, faculty members must make a difference because we have teaching responsibilities without the added demands of publishing or research. If we do not make a difference we should perish, but how do we assess this?

Conclusion

Assessment and collection of data at all levels has to be considered holistically. In isolation, they can mislead. Learning and teaching take place in and out of the classroom: in the classroom with lessons and out of the classroom with institutional resources and student initiative. All of this teaching and learning has to be measured. In addition, there are many variables that have to be considered, especially with ESL students, such as proficiency in native language; experience with higher education in native country; motivation, focus and desire; an understanding of the connection between education, employment, and more opportunities, and then those opportunities have to be realized; how a faculty member connects the teacher-student-curriculum relationship; and institutional resources.

- 43% of 1989-90 beginning post-secondary students seeking an associate's degree had attained some degree or certificate 5 years after initial enrollment.

This is the breakdown of the 43%:

- 8% bachelor's degree;
- 24% associate degree;
- 11% certificate;
- and students who did not earn a degree were enrolled for an average of 19 months. This group represents 57 % though the percentage is not listed. (8)

Institutions of higher education have to do much more than produce percentages and statistics if we want to decrease attrition rates.

Though this data may be useful, how do we know what happened to the other 57% and what are the factors that led to student success?

The conclusion is that assessment is nothing drastically new because it comes in so many forms and anyone who has ever taught has assessed: quizzes, surprise quizzes, midterms, finals, multiple choice, true-false, open-ended, and essay questions, research papers, speeches, impromptu speeches, formal presentations, quantitative, qualitative, formative, summative – so many forms and so many others. Who is to say which of these forms is most effective? As far as I know, there are no longitudinal studies that prove which form is most effective; furthermore, I am not convinced this would be useful since we are individuals teaching in environments of academic freedom and what works for one may not work for another.

Teaching and learning are elastic and move up and down and from side to side within the borders and framework of the curriculum, but this is also a society and culture that values individual expression and creativity. Therefore, how do we assess the curriculum, individual expression, and creativity with assessment tools or other forms of assessment?

For me the answer lies in giving faculty members choices. Provide them with assessment tools, rubrics to evaluate student work, samples of student work that qualify for "Fail", "Borderline", and "Pass", and then let them decide which tools and rubrics to use or to develop their own. You cannot force faculty members to use the same tool and rubric. This would stifle creativity, but course, department, and institutional standards will be followed if they are articulated clearly. Then departments and the institution have to provide faculty members and students with hard data concerning student success and attrition rates as well as factors that lead to student success.

ESL faculty members at BHCC were more than willing to change the curriculum and conduct more assessment when we learned with the little hard data and statistics that we had in 1996 that a significant number of ESL students were failing content courses and many had not even entered them.

Lesson level assessment leads to course outcome level assessment, which together with department and institutional level assessment provide the data that funding sources need

to consider requests for funding. In addition, the data, analyzed holistically, identifies for institutions of higher education and specifically community colleges areas of strengths and weaknesses, which can be improved.

Endnotes

1. While preparing our Department Self-Study in 1997, these statistics were available: According to the Title III proposal, 41% of ESL students transition into college programs; Also from the Title III proposal, of a sample of 343 ESL students registered in ESL courses in Fall 1992, only 141 or 41% remained at BHCC in Fall 1994. Of those that left, 71% were failing content courses; according to a report I ran, in September 1991, there were 485 students enrolled in "Day ESL Courses". By January of 1997, 68 of these students had earned more than 40-college level credits.
2. When BHCC and the ESL Department applied for a continuation of this grant, we were denied.
3. BHCC receives between $300,000 - $500,000 in Perkins funds annually of which 15% is applied toward professional development and assessment.
4. The ESL Department at BHCC has conducted two self-studies, 1989 and 1997. The self-study process calls for the ESL Department to write a report and make recommendations. An outside evaluator visits BHCC, meets with administrators, faculty members, and students, and writes a report with recommendations. The ESL Department then responds to the outside evaluator's report.
5. This information was confirmed by Christopher Schults, research assistant for the American Association of Community Colleges, (CSHULTS@aacc.nche.edu).
6. This idea was suggested by Professors Nancy Clair (Brown University) and Donald Freeman (School for International Training, Brattleboro, Vermont) during their Keynote Address at the MATSOL 2000 Conference and my many years as an ESL Coordinator and Department Chair.
7. According to Mr. Charles Cook, Director of New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC), each region has its own culture and an accredited institution in one area would also be accredited in another.
8. National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education, The Condition of Education, 1997, Indicator 11, page 68

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Chairing the Academic Department, The American Council on Education, A workshop for Division and Department Chairs and Deans, Clearwater, Florida, November 5-8, 1997.

Conference on College Composition and Communication of NCTE, Winter Workshop on Teaching Composition to Undergraduates, January 7-10, 1998, Clearwater, Florida.

American Association of Higher Education (AAHE) Assessment Conference, June 1998, Cincinnati, Ohio.

Conference Presentations on Assessment

Massachusetts Association of Teachers to Speakers of Other Languages (MATSOL) Conference: Setting Our Course, January 21-22, 2000. Title of presentation, "Involving Faculty Members and Students in Qualitative and Formative Assessment with Department Handbooks".

Pacific Rim Conference on Higher Education Planning and Assessment. Title of Presentation, "All Aboard: Involving Faculty Members and Students in Assessment". June 7, 2000.

Assessment Workshops

Somerville Center for Adult Learning and Education, Somerville, MA. April 15, 2000, Lesson Level and Outcome Level Assessment.

Quinsigamond Community College, Quinsigamond, MA. April 28, 2000, ESL Curriculum and Assessment.

The Four Pillars for Institutions of Higher Education

How effectively these four pillars interact will have a significant impact on student success, and one of the pillars has to be assessed in context with the other three.

STUDENTS

If the student has excellent language skills in L1 and experience with higher education in native country, is motivated, focused, and determined, and a second-generation college student, success is almost guaranteed. If the student is motivated, focused, and determined but lacks excellent language skills in L1; and is a first generation college student, success may not be guaranteed but highly possible. These are the students who will read and reread chapters and textbooks until they comprehend. They will write and re-write until it is right.

If the student does not have the above-mentioned characteristics, the other pillars will be challenged.

FACULTY MEMBERS

For ESL students, ESL faculty members serve many purposes: teacher, advisor, counselor, motivator, perhaps even friend and definitely someone to trust. ESL students like all students can immediately identify an effective instructor: one who combines content and process. Some ESL students put more of an emphasis on the personality of a teacher. Some may refuse to stay in a course section simply because they do not like the personality of the teacher. These students need to learn that in their educational journey they will encounter teachers they do not like but still study and learn with them.

ESL students may not want to visit an advisor or counselor because they expect their teachers to fill these roles. Therefore, ESL faculty members need to not only teach their particular course with expertise but also be familiar with all the institutional resources. Some students may have to be personally accompanied to an advisor or counselor.

ESL faculty members have to know how a particular course they teach connects to all the other ESL courses as well as to college content courses. They should know how to explain a master schedule and college catalog to even ESL Level I students. However, do institutions with large ESL Departments that depend on adjunct faculty members to teach the majority of ESL courses train their adjunct members for these tasks?

CURRICULUM

Grammar-based, functional-notional, English for Special Purposes (ESP), English for Academic Purposes (EAP), English for Vocational Purposes, Whole Language, Fluency First, Input Plus One, and so on. There are many ways to design an ESL curriculum. We

do not know which curriculum design is most effective. The CUNY study (See National and Local Data, pages 31 – 34) suggests that the Fluency First/Whole Language approach is more effective. However, this study also states that not all faculty members at CUNY follow the Fluency First Approach. The only obvious point is that we know it takes from five to seven years to learn academic English for an L2 student. Therefore, if we want L2 students to improve their reading and writing quickly and effectively, we have to engage them with academic reading and writing assignments as soon as possible.

Questions to consider: Do all the faculty members follow the curriculum? Does the ESL Department have standards? Is the ESL Department's curriculum aligned with the English Department's curriculum, and are these two departments' curricula aligned with all of the other academic departments' curricula?

INSITUTIONAL RESOURCES

Recruitment, orientation, advising, registration, Office of Student Payment, Financial Aid, counseling, tutors, and computer stations with ESL software: How do these institutional resources meet the needs of ESL students? **How are ESL students and the diversity they bring accepted by the institution?**

BHCC has more ESL tutors than ever before but there are not enough tutors for times that are most convenient for the students. The Center for Self-Directed Learning has networked computer stations with ESL software but not enough tutors to assist students as they work with this software. The Center also needs more technical assistance when a computer fails to function properly.

Considering The Four Pillars

The curriculums the ESL Department delivered in 1985 and 1991 were not accompanied by the number of tutors and computer stations with ESL software that accompany the 1998 and present curriculum. Therefore, this fact has to be considered when the three curricula are compared. The 1998 curriculum should have superior results.

ESL faculty members tend to focus on the student – teacher relationship because they are "people" people. They put more of an emphasis on the textbook being used for a particular ESL course rather than the curriculum. This situation is better than only considering teacher – curriculum and excluding the student. Very few ESL Faculty members put equal emphasis on Student – Curriculum – Faculty Member – Institutional Resources.

Forms Used To Collect Data

The forms are simple; I do not have a background in research. However, the statistics collected in this report will be given to the Director of Institutional Research and Assessment who reports to the Dean of Institutional Effectiveness at BHCC. They will be asked to create charts with percentages and evaluate for

- Sample Size
- Peer Review
- Normal Distribution
- Regression
- Correlation
- Margin of Error/Sigma Test, Test of Statistical Significance
- Standard Deviation

- The first form was used as I read student transcripts. Under the headings, I drew lines and columns, and on each line filled in information for each student listed on the transcript.

- The second form was used to represent or collect the data from

  - ESL Levels I, II, and III, for each period of time analyzed
    - SNAPSHOT, 1985, 1991, and 1998

  - and the overall totals.

Only this course	Only ESL	Only Developmental	ABDNPC	3-9 credits	12-24	27-39	>42	Cert.	AD
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	___	____	__	__	___

COURSE NUMBER_____ TITLE_____ YEAR _____ FACULTY_____

GRADES	CHANGED MAJOR	CONTENT COURSES				CREDITS > ESL	GRADUATED	
094/099 095 111 112	Y/N	#	P	F	IP/W/N/NA		Cert.	AD

30

31

YEAR_____**Level/s** _____**Total Transcripts** _____

DETAILS_____

	#s	%s
Only This Course		
Only ESL		
Only Developmental		
ABDNPC		
3 – 9		
12 – 24		
27 – 39		
>42		
CERT.		
AD.		
Still Enrolled (for 1998 cohort)		

WRITING SEQUENCE

1. 2 or more attempts to pass 094/099/095/111/112 _____
2. F, IP, W, NA, N in 094/099/095/111/112 _____
3. P / F, IP, W, NA, N RATIO for 111/112 _____

NUMBER of STUDENTS WHO ATTEMPTED:

- 094/099 _____
- 095 _____
- 111 _____
- 112 _____

Number of Students per Section _____

Faculty Member Full-Time Adjunct Ed. M. TESOL

COMMENTS: _____

_____

_____

Explanation of Terms and Clarification of Troublesome Areas

Transcripts

When transcripts were printed for me, two computer systems had just been merged: DATATEL and BISSI. I knew that there would be potential problems because of the merge and also because transcripts have not always been 100% accurate at BHCC.

- When transcripts from a section of a 1983 ESL course were printed, I received 11 transcripts but 21 students had completed the course. The explanation I received was that if the transcript was missing, the student did not go beyond that course, and student transcripts before 1983 are only available in hard copy. I did not go through the hard copies to find these student transcripts and assumed that they did not take the next course.

ABDNPC

ABDNPC: This acronym was used for "Attempted But Did Not Pass Content", which means that an ESL student enrolled in a college content course but did not pass it; the student may have received a grade of F, IP, W, N, NA.

Grading

- IP stands for In Progress, which means that the student has completed approximately 75% of the course work. The student and faculty member sign a contract for how and when the remaining work will be completed. Unfortunately, there are still "IP" grades on the old transcripts.
- N or NA means "no action", to keep this simple. A student's name was listed on the first course roster, but the student never attended any lessons.
- W is for a course withdrawal.
- F is for Fail.

I grouped these grades together because I wanted to know who passed courses and who did not. I know that there are many reasons for a student to receive grades of "IP", "N", or "W", etc. but the report focused on completion and attrition rates.

Attempted A Writing Course Two Or More Times

The writing courses analyzed were: Advanced ESL writing; ENG 095, a second semester developmental writing course offered by the English Department; ENG 111, College Writing I; and ENG 112, College Writing II.

One student may have taken one of these courses more than two times and received "N", "W", "W", "N", and I counted all of these grades.

For example, in 1989 one student
passed the advanced ESL writing course with a "B",
received "N", "W", and "C+" on a developmental writing course,
received "F", "F", "C" on another developmental writing course,
"F", "F" "C" on College Writing I and
"B" on College Writing II.

This student was counted **three times** as a student who attempted a writing course two or more times. This example is an exaggeration; there are few similar to this one.

PASS/F, IP, W, N, NA Ratio in College Writing I/II

The English Department at BHCC offers College Writing I, the essay, and College Writing II, the research paper. This ratio represents the number of students who passed these courses and the number of "F, IP, W, N, NA" grades given for these courses.

Developmental Writing

The English Department at BHCC offers developmental reading and writing courses, which are taken by native English speakers as well as L2 and ESL students. Upon completion of advanced ESL courses, most ESL students do not enroll in a developmental reading course. However, close to 80% enroll in ENG 095, a second semester developmental writing course.

Completion of College Level Courses

Students were grouped according to the number of college level course credits completed.

- 3 – 9
- 12 – 24
- 27 – 39
- more than 42

Students who completed between 3 – 9 credits remain in "limbo" because I do not have enough information to infer that these students may have transferred.

Students who completed 12 or more credits were considered as transfer students even though I am not 100% sure if they in fact transferred.

Certificates and Associate's Degrees

Students who earned both were counted **one time** as associate's degree recipients.

Students who earned a certificate such as ESL/Electronics or ESL/Allied Health before entering ESL Department coursers **were not counted** as recipients of certificates.

Standards of Success at a community college and in an ESL Department

The USA is divided into six regions for accrediting institutions of higher education: Northwest, Western Association, North Central, Middle States, New England, and Southern Association. These regions do not use the same standards to accredit institutions of higher education. Since there are no national standards to assess ESL Departments in community colleges, here is the list I considered while reading transcripts.

- How many students enrolled for a course and how many of those students completed it? At BHCC, we put far too much emphasis on initial enrollment and not enough at the end of a semester. We should be funded not for our initial enrollment but for enrollment at the end of a semester. However, ESL students at BHCC have a high and successful completion rate for individual ESL courses.

- How many ESL students take only one ESL or college content course to meet an individual need? We simply do not know but should be able to measure this.

- One goal of community colleges should be to give students the opportunity to fail. Open enrollment, lack of institutional resources, academic departments that do not align their curricula, lack of student preparedness, and student responsibilities out of the classroom should force community colleges to list this goal in their catalogs, but they do not.

- How many students move from one level of ESL to another? How many of the advanced level ESL students move on to college content courses?

- Upon completion of ESL courses, do ESL students immediately enroll in college writing courses or do they take non-writing college content courses first, such as accounting and introduction to computers? Are ESL students able to pass non-writing college level content courses but not college level writing courses?

- How do ESL students perform in college writing courses?

- How many ESL students jump from advanced ESL composition directly to College Writing I, the essay course, without having to take a developmental writing course?

- How many ESL students take the same college level course more than two times before passing it? This is not an indicator of persistence but rather an indicator that they are not prepared for that college content course.

- How is persistence measured? For ESL students persistence is seen in the amount of time spent on task in order to complete assignments and pass courses. This is almost impossible to measure without asking faculty members to complete surveys. Generally speaking, faculty members enjoy teaching ESL students because of their high levels of motivation and focus.

- Transfer Rates: This information is not part of this report at the moment. Now that BHCC has an Office of Institutional Assessment, we should have specific statistics for ESL students and their transfer rates soon. We do have information about transfer rates from a general perspective but not specific to ESL students and especially not for those students who have earned between 3 and 49 credits.

- Graduation rates from certificate and associate degree programs: For the purposes of this report, if an ESL student has graduated from a certificate and associate degree program, s/he is counted once.

National and Local Data

BHCC simply does not have many statistics concerning its ESL student population. In the close to 20 years that I have been employed by BHCC, there has been a reluctance to generate statistics. The general feeling has been, "We are providing a good service to a needy population."

LOCAL DATA

1. From the BHCC Title III Proposal

- According to the BHCC Title III proposal, 41% of ESL students transition into college programs.

- Also from the Title III proposal, of a sample of 343 ESL students registered in ESL courses in Fall 1992, only 141 or 41% remained at BHCC in Fall 1994. Of those that left, 71% were failing content courses;

2. According to two reports I ran and I am no expert at running reports, but since I wanted statistics, I had to run them by myself. I had worked in the Admissions Office and was somewhat familiar with the computer system for running reports but not of this nature.

- In September 1991, there were 485 students enrolled in "Day ESL Courses". By January of 1997, 68 of these students had earned more than 40-college level credits.

- In September 1994, 473 students were enrolled in "Day ESL Courses". By January 1997, 89 students had earned more than 40 college level credits.

What happened to all the other students?

3. BHCC Professor David Massey's 1998 Sabbatical Report

BHCC Professor David Massey completed a sabbatical report in 1998 concerning student performance in developmental courses. His cohort group consisted of students enrolled simultaneously in ENG 090, RDG 090, and MAT 090. These are the lowest level developmental reading, writing, and math courses respectively. L2 students represented about one – half of his cohort group, but they were not enrolled in ESL courses. All of the students in this cohort group registered late.

- 75% of this cohort group passed RDG 090. However, L2 students did significantly worse. Their failure rate was more than double that of L1 students.
- L2 students had a 42% failure rate with RDG 090.

- 60% of the cohort group passed ENG 090 with no significant difference for language background.
- 69% of the cohort group returned the following semester.
- The academic performance of these returning students dropped dramatically during their second semester at BHCC.
- The retention rate for this cohort group through three semesters was 38%.
- This cohort group had a GPA of 1.68 after 2 semesters but a GPA of 2.64 after 3 semesters.

What has happened to Professor Massey's Report? As far as I know the Mathematics Department has introduced a math course below the MAT 090 level. Has the English Department analyzed its RDG 090 curriculum to see if it meets or addresses the needs of L2 students?

NATIONAL DATA

1. In 1998 there were 172, 751,000 persons aged 25 and older in the USA. Of this group,

- 29,638,000 or 17.2 % had some college with no degree; and
- 12,868,000 or 7.4% had an associate degree.

SOURCE: All About Community Colleges, American Association of Community Colleges: Highest Educational Attainment of Persons aged 25 and older: 1992-1998.

2. 43% of 1989-90 beginning postsecondary students seeking an associate's degree had attained some degree or certificate 5 years after initial enrollment.

This is the breakdown of the 43%:

- 8% bachelor's degree,
- 24% associate degree,
- 11% certificate, and
- 57% (students who did not earn a degree were enrolled for an average of 19 months).

SOURCE: National Center for Educational Statistics. U.S. Department of Education, The Condition of Education, 1997, Indicator 11, page 68.

3. Of all community college students in 1989-1990,

- 37% completed a degree at some institution;
- 22% completed a certificate or associate's degree at their first institution; and
- 63% did not complete a degree and spent an average of 14 months of enrollment

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 1990 Beginning Postsecondary Students

NATIONAL ESL DEPARTMNENT DATA

1. **CUNY – The City College provides data on more than 800 ESL students and the Whole Language/Fluency First Curricula Approach from 1983 – 1991. ESL faculty members at The City College were concerned with "the high failure rate of non-native speakers in writing courses". I infer that this failure rate was in both ESL and English Department writing courses.**

- "Between 1983 and 1991 the percentage of students satisfactorily completing the last of the three ESL courses on the first try increased from 38% to 77%."

- "Fluency First students found it easier to pass the College-required English composition course. Whereas in 1983 students had tried this course an average of 1.47 times before passing it, by 1991 the average was down to 1.07 attempts."

SOURCE: Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education, Program Book, 1996. U.S. Department of Education Mirror; http://www.ed.gov/offices/ope/FIPSE/96ProgBk/CunyC3-html CUNY – The City College, Fluency First in English as a Second Language, Lessons Learned from FIPSE Projects III – June 1996, Adele MacGowan-Gilhooly, Anthea Tillyer, Department of ESL.

2. **CUNY, Hunter College provides us with more data. In 1995, of an enrollment of 18,000 students nearly half were L2 students. "Approximately 1,000 were enrolled in developmental English classes for bilingual students."**

- "After four terms, approximately 50% of developmental students dropped out."

- "The average pass rate in intermediate ESL was about 75%.

- When an intermediate ESL course was paired or clustered with a college content course (The Greek and Latin Roots of English), the pass rate was 100%.

SOURCE: Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education, Program Book 1995: http://www.ed.gov/offices/OPE/FIPSE/95ProgBk/Cunyhanl.html CUNY, Hunter College, Enhancing Success Rates for Bilingual Students Through Paired Courses, Tamara M. Green and Trudith Smoke.

3. **Other that these two reports, I have not been able to find other national/local statistics concerning ESL student performance at community colleges. However, the search will continue. I am not the only one to come up empty.**

- Andrea Todd is Research Associate for EROLS and a graduate student conducting dissertation research on Academic Writing in ESL Classes and the Transition to Mainstream English Composition Classes. Ms. Todd confirmed that there are no national studies concerning ESL student performance at community colleges. In addition, she has not found any statistical data on success rates for ESL programs.

- Christopher Shults is Research Assistant at American Association of Community Colleges. He said that there are no "detailed statistics" on ESL at the community college level, and "Some of the reasons for this are that ESL is sometimes considered remedial, sometimes not. Sometimes it is for credit, sometimes it is not. There are neither accurate remedial or non-credit enrollment figures available on a national level, so there is no way to track the progress nationally."

- Kent A. Phillippe is Senior Research Associate at American Association of Community Colleges. "With regard to transfer, completion, and attrition (rates for ESL students), we have no good national numbers. It is difficult to track these, since students do not use only one institution, and often stop-out for a period and return to the same institution. Getting a good handle on this is therefore quite difficult."

GENERAL STATISTICS

1. In 1998 there were 126,542 Institutions of Higher Education in the USA. SOURCE: National Center for Educational Statistics, US Department of Education, Digest of Education Statistics, 1999, Table 5, p.14.

2. In 1997 there were 1,132 two-year colleges: 995 Public and 137 Independent.

3. Community Colleges enroll

- 46% of all African American students in higher education
- 55% of all Hispanic
- 46% of Asian/Pacific Islander
- 55% of Native American

4. The average age of community college students is 29.

5. 33% of community college students receive some kind of financial aid.

SOURCE for numbers 2-5: American Association of Community Colleges, 1996-1997 National Community College Snapshot.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Presentation (Quantitative) and Analysis (Qualitative) of Data

THE SNAPSHOT COHORT

This sabbatical report began when the Dean of the Center of Workforce and International Development asked me for a summary of ESL Department accomplishments. The Center was applying for the American Council on International and Intercultural Education (ACIIE) 2000 International/Intercultural Achievement Award in the category of English Program for International Students. I decided to read student transcripts in order to give the most accurate description of the ESL Department's accomplishments. BHCC and the ESL Department received this ACIIE Achievement Award.

Before selecting transcripts, I thought of variables (See Variables Section Page 11). To have some control over the number of students in each section and the faculty member, I decided to read course sections instead of selecting student transcripts randomly. Student transcripts from the following courses were read:

- from 1983, a traditional advanced level reading course;
- a 1989 transitional ESL course, called English for Business and computers;
- and a 1998 integrated advanced ESL Reading course that was integrated with advanced ESL Listening, advanced ESL Writing, and an introductory computer course.

These three courses were selected to compare a traditional ESL curriculum with two innovative ESL approaches.

The 1983 advanced reading course enrolled 21 students and an analysis reveals statistics that are consistent with today's national and local statistics (See National and Local Data pages 32 - 35).

- 10 transcripts were not found in the system and therefore assumed that these students did not go on to the next level.
- 6 graduated with the associate's degree, 2 with a certificate, and 1 with more than 42 credits;
- therefore, 9 received degrees at some institution, which is 43%.

The 1983 group studied with a traditional ESL curriculum. The 1989 group studied with the BHCC ESL Department's first attempt with a transitional ESL course. The results are far superior to today's national and local data.

- All of the students attempted college content courses.
- 65% earned a certificate or associate's degree at some institution: 2 earned between 12-24 credits; 2 between 27-39; 3 more than 42; 2 graduated with a certificate, and 4 with the associate's degree.

This is a small cohort group but the factor that leads to success for L2 students is the connection of ESL instruction to college courses and integrated curricula.

However, this group struggled with the writing course sequence.

- 13 students needed 2 or more attempts to pass one of the writing courses.
- 19 received F, IP, W, NA, N grades in one of the writing courses.
- The PASS/F, IP, W, N, NA ratio in College Writing I/II was 11/11.

The "Integrated" course in 1998 looks to be even more promising.

- 10 students have already earned between 12-24 credits.
- 17 are still enrolled.
- 4 students needed 2 or more attempts to pass a writing course.
- 5 students received an F, IP, W, N, NA in one of the writing courses.
- The PASS/F, IP, W, N, NA ratio in College Writing I/II is 14/3.

The "SNAPSHOT" of these courses from 1983 to 2000 reveals the following and the students in the 1998 group have yet to terminate their studies.

- 12 have earned between 12-24 credits; 6 between 27-39; 6 more than 42; 4 graduated with a certificate; and 10 with an associate's degree.
- This is 63% and above the national average.

Even though this is another small cohort, factors that lead to success for L2 students can be identified:

- Direct connection between ESL and college content courses
- Learning Communities
- Faculty members working together
- Alignment of curricula

THE 1985 COHORT

157 total transcripts read: 54 from Level I; 51 from Level II; 52 from Level III

The curriculum at this time was a traditional grammar based ESL curriculum (See ESL Department Curricula pages 5 - 8). There were virtually no tutors and few computer stations with ESL software. The Advanced Level courses were four-credit courses; three credits in the classroom and one credit in the Learning Center, but this one-credit was not formally monitored or structured.

- 32% of the students did not move on to the next course.

- 35% of Level I students did not enroll in Level II.
- 57% of Level II students did not enroll in Level III.
- 6% of Level III students did not enroll in college content courses.

- 54% did not enroll or if they did enroll did not pass a college content course.

Of the three curricula analyzed, this one had the highest attrition rates.

- 35% graduated with either a certificate or associate's degree from some institution.
- 12 % were in the limbo stage, 3 – 9 credits earned.
- 15% graduated from BHCC with a certificate.
- 11% graduated from BHCC with an associate's degree

These percentages are lower than the percentages for graduation rates from community colleges in today's national data.

Analyzing the Writing Sequence

- 15% took one of the writing courses 2 or more times.
- 50% received grades of F, IP, W, NA, N in one of these writing courses.
- The PASS/F, IP, W, N, NA ratio for College Writing I/II was 38/17
- 65% attempted advanced ESL writing
- 38% attempted the developmental writing course
- 21% attempted college writing I
- 11% attempted college writing II

The number of students in course sections: 28, 26, 26, 27, 27, 18, 23. These numbers are higher than the numbers for 1991 and 1998.

The Faculty Factor

- 2 were full-time without an Ed. M. in TESOL;
- 2 were full-time with an Ed. M. in TESOL;
- 3 were adjuncts with an Ed. M. in TESOL;

Comparing the two sections of the Level I ESL course

In one section with 28 students

- 19 attempted college level content courses.
- 6 were ABDNPC.
- 9 did not move beyond ESL.
- 7 graduated with either a certificate or associate's degree.

In the other section of the same course with 26 students

- 11 attempted college level content courses.
- 2 were ABDNPC.
- 13 did not move beyond ESL.
- 3 graduated with either a certificate or associate's degree.

This striking difference is seen again when advanced level student transcripts are analyzed.

In one section with 27 students

- 12 attempted college level content courses.
- 2 were ABDNPC.
- 13 did not move beyond ESL.
- 4 graduated with either a certificate or associate's degree.

In the other section of the same course with 28 students

- 22 attempted college level content courses.
- 1 was ABDNPC.
- 5 did not move beyond ESL.
- 14 graduated with either a certificate or associate's degree.

These statistics would be hidden if only the aggregate total percentages had been presented.

In my opinion, these are the factors that lead to the success rates in the sections above:

- The faculty member connects the particular ESL course s/he is teaching to all other ESL courses and to college content courses.
- As a result, ESL students, especially in Level I see that the road to college content courses is not impossible or so far away.
- The faculty member can explain the master schedule, college catalog, and institutional resources.
- The faculty member attends ESL Department meetings and is active in the decision making process.
- The faculty member sets high but attainable goals for all students.
- The faculty member delivers the curriculum set forth by the department and meets individual student needs.

THE 1991 COHORT

138 Total Transcripts read: Level I – 42; Level II – 46; Level III - 50

This curriculum featured a new and more challenging level III within the context of a traditional grammar based curriculum. There were some tutors and computer stations with ESL software, (See ESL Department Curricula pages 5 – 8).

- 24 % did not move on to the next course.

- 26 % of Level I students did not enroll in Level II.
- 33 % of Level II students did not enroll in Level III.
- 16 % of Level III students did not enroll in college content courses.

- 45 % did not enroll or if they did enroll did not pass college content courses.

The attrition rate is an improvement from the 1985 cohort group, especially enrollment from Level I to Level II and from Level II to Level III.

- 36 % graduated with a certificate or associate's degree from some institution.
- 19 % were in the limbo stage, 3 – 9 credits earned.

The graduation rate from some institution is similar to the 1985 cohort.

- 4 % graduated with a certificate from BHCC.
- 9 % graduated with an associate's degree from BHCC.

This 1991-graduation rate from BHCC is lower than the 1985 cohort group.

Analyzing the Writing Sequence.

- 28 % took one of the writing courses 2 or more times.
- 52 % received grades of F, IP, W, NA, N in one of the writing courses.
- The PASS/F, IP, W, N, NA ratio in College Writing I/II was 61/25
- 77 % attempted advanced ESL writing.
- 39 % attempted the developmental writing course.
- 37 % attempted College Writing I.
- 17 % attempted College Writing II.

There was an improvement with the writing sequence for this cohort of students. The number of students who attempted and passed College Writing I increased by 16%; College Writing II - 6%. The PASS/F, IP, W, N, NA ratio for College Writing I/II in 1985 was 38/17 and in 1991- 61/25. However, the 2 or more attempts and grades of F, IP, W, NA, N, in any of the writing courses remained about the same.

The number of students in course sections: 24, 19, 23, 24, 21, 32. These numbers are lower than the numbers for 1985 and higher than the numbers for 1991.

The Faculty Factor

- 3 were full-time with an Ed. M. in TESOL.
- 1 was full-time without an Ed. M. in TESOL
- 2 were adjuncts with an Ed. M. in TESOL.

Comparing the two sections of a Level II course

In one section with 24 students,

- 5 students did not move on to Level III.
- 14 students earned some college credits.

In the other section with 22 students,

- 10 students did not move on to Level III.
- 7 students earned some college credits.

Comparing the two sections of a Level III advanced writing course

In one section with 21 students,

- 3 students skipped the developmental writing course and passed College Writing I.
- 17 earned college credits.

In the other section with 32 students,

- 11 students skipped the developmental writing course and 9 passed College Writing I.
- 21 students earned college credits.

From the perspective of ESL Course and Department Outcome Assessment, shouldn't there be more consistency with student performance in sections of the same ESL course?

THE 1998 COHORT

The transcripts for this group were printed on June 15, 2000. The numbers and percentages printed below will change. I will ask for and read these same student transcripts in June 2003, a five-year period, which seems to be the procedure for establishing national data for community college graduation and attrition rates.

157 total transcripts read: Level I – 42; Level II – 42; Level III – 73

The ESL curriculum is new and features reading/writing and grammar across all courses. There are more tutors than ever before with many computer stations with ESL software (See ESL Department Curricula pages 5 - 8).

- 26 % have not moved on to the next course. *1985=32% 1991=24%*

- 33 % of Level I students have not moved on to Level II. *1985=35% 1991=26%*
- 29 % of Level II students have not moved to Level III. *1985=57% 1991=33%*
- 19 % of Level III have not moved on to college content courses. *1985=6% 1991=16%*

The percentages for the 1998 cohort will change when these transcripts are read again in 2003. In 1985, Levels I and II consisted of one 12-credit course, and level III consisted of three 4-credit courses. In 1991, Levels I and II had two 6-credit courses, and Level III had four 3-credit courses. The 1998 curriculum has four 3-credit courses in each level.

- 46 % have not enrolled or if they have enrolled, have not passed college content courses.

This percentage was 54 % in 1985 and 45 % in 1991.

- 4 % have graduated with a certificate.
- 35 % are enrolled as of June 15, 2000.
- 48 % have earned between 3 and 39 credits.

No conclusions about this data can be drawn until 2003.

Analyzing The Writing Sequence

- 7 % took one of the writing courses 2 or more times. 1985=15% 1991=28%
- 38 % received grades of F, IP, N, W in one of the writing courses. 1985=50% 1991=52%
- The PASS/F, IP, N, W ratio for College Writing I/II is 60/16. 1985=38/17 1991= 61/25

These percentages reflect an improvement from the 1985 and 1991 cohorts.

- 80 % have attempted advanced ESL writing. 1985=65% 1991=77%
- 40 % have attempted the developmental writing course. 1985=38% 1991=39%
- 34 % have attempted College Writing I. 1985=21% 1991=37%
- 12 % have attempted College Writing II. 1985=11% 1991=17%

These statistics reflect an improvement with the writing sequence of courses due to the new ESL Department curriculum and the additional institutional resources. How are the pillars of "STUDENTS" and "FACULTY MEMBERS" factored into this improvement?

The number of students in sections: 20, 22, 27, 14, 26, 25, 23. These are fewer students per course than in 1985 and 1991.

The Faculty Factor

- 3 were full-time with an Ed. M. in TESOL
- 3 were adjuncts with an Ed. M. in TESOL.

Comparing two sections of a Level I course

In one section with 22 students,
- 5 are still enrolled.
- 3 have earned between 3 – 9 credits.

In the other section with 20 students,
- 11 are still enrolled.
- 6 have earned between 3 – 9 credits.
- 4 have earned between 12 – 24 credits.
- 1 has earned more than 27 credits.

Why can't we get these results in all level I sections?

Comparing two sections of a Level II course

In one section with 14 students,

- 4 are still enrolled.
- 6 have earned between 3 – 9 credits.

In another section with 27 students,

- 11 are still enrolled.
- 3 have earned between 3 – 9 credits.
- 5 have earned between 12 – 24 credits.
- 4 have earned more than 27 credits
- 1 graduated with a certificate.
-

What happens in these successful sections?

THE 512 TRANSCRIPTS

- 60 from the SNAPSHOT
- 157 from 1985
- 138 from 1991
- 157 from 1998

- 45 % did not enroll in college content courses.
- 17 % were in the "LIMBO" stage with between 3-9 earned college credits. Did they transfer?
- 37 % earned between 12 – 39 or more than 42 college credits, or graduated from BHCC with either a certificate or associate's degree. Did all of these students with fewer that 60 credits transfer?

If the students with 3 – 9 earned college credits have transferred and graduated from some institution then the graduation rate of this BHCC cohort is 55% and above the percentage from the national data. However, it is not known if these students transferred and graduated.

If the students with more than 12 earned college credits transferred and graduated from some institution, this BHCC cohort is 37 % and similar to the percentage from the national data.

- 32 % of Level I students did not enroll in Level II.
- 40 % did not enroll in Level III.
- 14 % did not enroll in college content courses.

The ESL Department and the institution can focus on lowering these percentages, especially for Levels I and II. When the statistics are presented in aggregate the

percentages are high for Levels I and II. However, some individual faculty member course sections have lower attrition rates. Why?

Analyzing The Writing Sequence

- 15 % of the students made 2 or more attempts to pass a writing course.

This percentage is 7 % for the 1998 cohort; it was 15 % for the 1985 cohort, and 28 % for the 1991 cohort.

- 43 % of the students received grades of F, IP, W, N, NA, in the writing courses.

This percentage is 38 % for the 1998 cohort; 50 % for the 1985 cohort; and 52 % for the 1991 cohort.

	1985	1991	1998
• 74 % of ESL students attempted the advanced ESL writing course.	65	77	80
• 40 % attempted the developmental writing course.	38	39	40
• 36 % attempted College Writing I.	21	37	34
• 15 % attempted College Writing II.	11	17	12

The PASS/F, IP, W, N, NA Ratio for College Writing I/II was 197/75.

- SNAPSHOT = 38/17 1985 = 38/17 1991 = 61/25 1998 = 60/16

The number of students who attempted College Writing I and II and the number who passed those courses.

- SNAPSHOT = 50 / 38
- 1985 = 51 / 38
- 1991 = 75 / 61
- 1998 = 73 / 60
-

The average number of students per section was 23 with the smallest being 14 and the largest 32.

The statistics of this report suggest that the "integrated" courses are the most successful. The new curriculum with improved institutional resources, tutors and software, looks more promising than the first two curricula. However, some individual course sections have had excellent results regardless of curriculum or institutional resources.

YEAR 1983, 1989, 1998 **Level/s** ESL 3 **Total Transcripts** 60

DETAILS SNAPSHOT TOTALS

			#s	%s
Only This Course		*	11	18%
Only ESL	15	25 %	0	
Only Developmental			0	
ABDNPC		*	4	
3 – 9	---------- limbo	12 %	7	
12 – 24			12	20 %
27 – 39			6	10 %
>42	38	63%	6	10 %
CERT.			4	10% / Total 41
AD.			10	24% / Total 41
Still Enrolled (for 1998 cohort)			17	

WRITING SEQUENCE

4. 2 or more attempts to pass 094/099/095/111/112	18
5. F, IP, W, NA, N in 094/099/095/111/112	28
6. P / F, IP, W, NA, N RATIO for 111/112	38/17

NUMBER of STUDENTS WHO ATTEMPTED:

• 094/099	47
• 095	29
• 111	34
• 112	16

Number of Students per Section 19, 21, 20 average = 20

Faculty Member **3 full-time with Ed. M. in TESOL**

COMMENTS: **total of 41 students used to calculate Cert. and AD, the 1998 cohort is not included in this percentage. Percentages assumed that 12-24 credits earned = transfer and 3-9 credits earned did not transfer.**

YEAR 1985 **Level/s** I = 54 II = 51 III = 52 **Total Transcripts** 157

DETAILS Traditional ESL curriculum with minimal institutional resources

				#s	%s
Only This Course		*		50	32 %
Only ESL		84		17	11 %
Only Developmental		54 %		2	1 %
ABDNPC		*		14	9 %
3 – 9	------- limbo 19	12 %		19	12 %
12 – 24			*	7	5 %
27 – 39				5	3 %
>42			55	3	2 %
CERT.			35 %	22	15%
AD.			*	18	11 %
Still Enrolled (for 1998 cohort)				NA	

WRITING SEQUENCE

1. 2 or more attempts to pass 094/099/095/111/112	22	15 %
2. F, IP, W, NA, N in 094/099/095/111/112	80	50 %
3. P / F, IP, W, NA, N RATIO for 111/112	38/17	

NUMBER of STUDENTS WHO ATTEMPTED:

• 094/099	102	65 %
• 095	60	38 %
• 111	33	21 %
• 112	18	11 %

Number of Students per Section 28, 26, 26, 27, 27, 18, 23 average = 25

Faculty Member 2 full-time with no Ed. M. in TESOL; 2 full-time and 3 adjunct with Ed. M. in TESOL

COMMENTS: 57% of Level II students did not enroll in Level III.
6 % of Level III enrolled in college content courses.

YEAR 1991 **Level/s** I = 42 II = 46 III = 50 **Total Transcripts** 138

DETAILS New More Challenging Level III, Grammar-Based Curriculum, some tutors/ computer stations with ESL software

				#s	%s
Only This Course			*	34	24 %
Only ESL				11	8 %
Only Developmental		62	45 %	11	8 %
ABDNPC			*	6	4 %
3 – 9	----- limbo 26	19 %		26	19 %
12 – 24			*	24	18 %
27 – 39		50	36 %	6	4 %
>42				4	3 %
CERT.				3	2 %
AD.			*	13	9 %
Still Enrolled (for 1998 cohort)				N/A	

WRITING SEQUENCE

1. 2 or more attempts to pass 094/099/095/111/112	40	28 %
2. F, IP, W, NA, N in 094/099/095/111/112	72	52 %
3. P / F, IP, W, NA, N RATIO for 111/112	61/25	

NUMBER of STUDENTS WHO ATTEMPTED:

• 094/099	106	77 %
• 095	54	39 %
• 111	51	37 %
• 112	24	17 %

Number of Students per Section 24, 19, 23, 24, 21, 32 – smaller than the 1985 cohort

Faculty Member 3 Full-Time & 2 adjunct with TESOL- 1 full-time no TESOL

COMMENTS: more students made it to College Writing I & II – attrition rate lower than 1985- 2 or > attempts to pass 094/095/111/112 and F, IP, W, NA, N remain about then same as 1985 cohort – PASS/F, IP, W, N, NA ratio for English 111/112 improved from 1985

YEAR 1998 **Level/s** I = 42; II = 42; III = 73 **Total Transcripts** 157

DETAILS New Curriculum, More Tutors and Computer Stations with ESL software

		#s	%s
Only This Course	*	41	26 %
Only ESL		13	8 %
Only Developmental	73 = 46 %	3	2 %
ABDNPC	*	16	10 %
3 – 9		36	23 %
12 – 24	*	21	13 %
27 – 39		17	11 %
>42	48 = 31 %	5	3 %
CERT.		4	3 %
AD.	*	1	
Still Enrolled (for 1998 cohort)	**as of JUNE 15, 2000**	56	35 %

WRITING SEQUENCE

7. 2 or more attempts to pass 094/099/095/111/112	12	7 %
8. F, IP, W, NA, N in 094/099/095/111/112	61	38 %
9. P / F, IP, W, NA, N RATIO for 111/112	60/16	

NUMBER of STUDENTS WHO ATTEMPTED:

• 094/099	125	80 %
• 095	62	40 %
• 111	54	34 %
• 112	19	12 %

Number of Students per Section 20, 22, 27, 14, 26, 25, 23 average = 22

Faculty Member 3 full-time and 3 adjunct all with Ed. M. in TESOL

COMMENTS: These same transcripts will be read again in 2003. The improvement in the writing sequence is noteworthy so far.

TOTALS Snapshot = 60; 1985 = 157; 1991 = 138; 1998 = 157 Total Transcripts 512

			#s	%s
Only This Course		*	136	27 %
Only ESL		232 45 %	41	8 %
Only Developmental			16	3 %
ABDNPC		*	40	8 %
3 – 9	--------- limbo	17 %	88	17 %
12 – 24			64	13 %
27 – 39			34	7 %
>42			18	4 %
CERT.			33	7 %
AD.			42	8 %
Still Enrolled (for 1998 cohort)		as of June 2000	___73 out of 176	45 %

WRITING SEQUENCE

10. 2 or more attempts to pass 094/099/095/111/112	78	15 %
11. F, IP, W, NA, N in 094/099/095/111/112	218	43 %
12. P / F, IP, W, NA, N RATIO for 111/112	197 / 75	

NUMBER of STUDENTS WHO ATTEMPTED:

• 094/099	380	74 %
• 095	205	40 %
• 111	172	36 %
• 112	77	15 %

Number of Students per Section average = 23 smallest = 14; largest = 32

COMMENTS: 32 % of Level I students did not enroll in Level II.

40 % of Level II did not enroll in Level III; in 1985 57 %.

14 % of Level III did not enroll in college content courses.

Conclusions, Recommendations, and Suggestions for More Research and Collection of Data

CONCLUSIONS

BHCC needs more data about ESL and L2 student performance in this institution. The statistics from the 512 student transcripts in this sabbatical report suggest that the institution has to connect assessment at the four levels:

- Lesson Level Assessment
- Course Outcome Level Assessment
- Department Outcome Level Assessment
- Institutional Assessment

Analyzing assessment at one of these levels to the exclusion of the other three can lead to distorted representation of course, department, institution and most importantly student performance.

The statistics collected in this report do not lead to a direct analysis of which ESL curriculum has been most effective. The are too many variables such as student preparedness and motivation, institutional resources, and especially the faculty factor, which has not been measured or even considered in any report that I have read.

Faculty members at the community college level do make a difference. This is the most obvious factor that is reflected by the data of this report. The variations that exist in student performance in different sections of the same ESL course taught by different faculty members are noteworthy.

RECOMMENDATIONS

ESL faculty members have to meet more frequently than they do now to discuss the following:

- How one ESL course is connected to other ESL courses;
- How ESL courses lead to and are connected to the writing courses in the English Department;
- How ESL course are connected to college content courses;
- How to refer students to institutional resources as soon as possible;
- ESL Department Handbooks, Master Schedule, College Catalog and how to use these resources in lessons;

In addition, ESL faculty members need to meet with members of the English Department and all other academic departments to discuss the following:

- The reading and writing demands that will be expected of ESL students once they enter academic college courses;
- An assessment of L2 student writing and what is considered developmental and college level writing
- Writing Across the Curriculum at BHCC
- Alignment of Curricula across academic departments

The ESL Department may have to seek funding in order to reimburse all faculty members to attend these meetings and the institution will have to work around the union contract to make these meetings mandatory for all ESL faculty members.

Engaging faculty members in the above mentioned points will connect the four pillars and lead to lower attrition rates in ESL courses, especially Levels I and II. The transcripts do not suggest the following, but Level I ESL students must feel frustrated when they learn that they will have to study ESL for three semesters before they can enroll in college content courses.

Level II ESL students may not feel the same level of frustration but their attrition rates suggest that there is not enough of a connection between ESL and college content courses. ESL Level I and II students need to be informed of the success rates for Level III ESL students, especially when they enroll in the integrated courses and either of the certificate programs for ESL students: ESL/Electronics and ESL/Allied Health.

The ESL Department and other academic departments at BHCC have to consider offering integrated coursers for ESL Level II students. In addition, more certificate programs based on the model of ESL/Electronics and ESL/Allied Health should be offered.

MORE RESEARCH and COLLECTION of DATA

This report suggests that the "integrated" courses are the most successful. **BHCC needs more data to support this.**

All academic departments will have to identify college content courses that will be appropriate for ESL Level II students. Does CMP 105 need to be integrated with three advanced level ESL courses?

ESL Level II students have taken CMP 105 in the past. **A simple query** of the BISSI system will reveal how they have performed in CMP 105 without the assistance of the integrated courses. If this query suggests that ESL Level II students have performed well with CMP 105 then CMP 105 should be integrated with Level II ESL courses.

Other college courses that may be appropriate for ESL Level II students include Principles of Accounting I and Keyboarding: Intro to Micro.

In addition, the institution should consider offering more certificate programs following the ESL/Electronics and ESL/Allied Health models. The success rates of these certificate

programs are exceptional. However, the transcripts reviewed in this report suggest that graduates of the ESL/Allied Health Certificate Program (ESL Options) struggle with ESL academic courses. **More data is needed about these students**. The ESL and Criminal Justice Departments developed the ESL/Criminal Justice Certificate program two years ago but it has not been offered.

The statistics collected from this report suggest that ESL students are performing with greater success in the writing courses due to the new curriculum, tutors and computer stations with ESL software, and it is too early to know if the success rate in other college courses has also increased. **More statistics need to be collected concerning how ESL students perform in college content courses.**

According to this report, 88 ESL students have earned between 3 – 9 college credits. They remain in the "limbo" stage because we do not know if someone with 3 – 9 credits has transferred. **The institution needs to collect data concerning these students.**

These are the challenges that face the ESL Department, other academic departments and the institution in the attempt to increase ESL student graduation and transfer rates from BHCC and lower ESL student attrition rates.

- Collect more data about ESL and L2 students.
- Direct connection between ESL courses and college content courses, especially the writing courses in the English Department
- ESL faculty members who can function equally well as teachers and advisors
- Faculty members working together on issues of curricula
- Alignment of curricula
- Learning communities
- Seeing the excellent results in some sections of ESL courses in all sections of ESL courses
- Integrated courses for Level II ESL students
- More ESL Certificate Programs

The End ?

Assessment Never Ends !